FIELD GUIDE TO WRESTLING CRYPTIDS

US Department of Wrestling
Cryptid Investigation Division

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United States Department of Wrestling
Cryptid Investigation Division

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Information on the contents of the Field Guide to Wrestling Cryptids and other publications may be obtained by writing:

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352 J St NW
Washington DC 20006

The Department of Wrestling gratefully acknowledges the research contributions to this Field Guide provided by the brave members of the Cryptid Investigation Division.
May their sacrifices not have been in vain.

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FOREWARD

The Field Guide to Wrestling Cryptids is the official handbook of the Cryptid Investigation Division of the United States Department of Wrestling. It describes the details and characteristics of a number of different wrestling cryptids in an attempt to raise awareness and educate investigators about entities they might encounter in the field. As a rule, this guide must be necessarily incomplete, as new cryptid wrestlers are discovered and old cryptid wrestlers retire or are ultimately identified/categorized/defeated in combat.

As always, users of the Field Guide are invited to comment on it and any problems they may have in using it, up to and including death and/or defeat in a one-fall match.

Steve Austin,

Administrator of Cryptozoological Services

PREFACE

The Cryptid Investigation Division emphasizes action, not deliberation. It is hoped that this guide will assist agents in this regard. That said, Investigators must always exercise due care and caution when dealing with wrestling cryptids. It is hoped that this Field Guide will empower investigators to safely deal with the ever-growing wrestling cryptid menace.

INTRODUCTION

A cryptid is an animal that “cryptozoologists believe may exist somewhere in the wild, but is not believed to exist by mainstream science.” A wrestler is “someone who wrestles.” Put them together and you’ve got a very special sports entertainer. The phenomenon of cryptids engaging in and with the world of professional wrestling stretches back decades. Indeed, it has been speculated that the number of cryptids and the number of wrestling cryptids is almost identical. And as this number has grown, so has the need to develop scientific methods to identify, track, and challenge such cryptids to matches. This Field Guide serves in this capacity and is an invaluable resource for investigators of cryptid wrestlers everywhere. There are a number of wrestling cryptid guides in print, but none of them can match the scope, depth, up-to-date scholarship, and practicality of this official guide.

KEY DETAILS

Wrestling Cryptids are found with shockingly even distribution throughout North America and beyond.

Individual species of cryptid wrestlers are typically associated with specific habitats. A Bigfoot will most often be found wrestling in glades or steppes, whereas The Shark prefers to engage in combat near large bodies of water.

Uncertainty is a key component of cryptid wrestler tracking that an investigator must learn to live with. The large and fearsome Swamp Monster might terrify you until he becomes a valuable tag team partner, while the diminutive and adorable Alushe might make you drop your guard as you try to pet him, only for him to then kick your ass and cause you to get pinned by whoever he is serving as a valet.

Genetic analysis has revealed that a cryptid's species is not a good predictor of its relationships in the ring. Never assume that a given cryptid wrestler is a face OR a heel.

Despite their rarity and generally solitary nature, many wrestling cryptids try to join stables or factions to seek safety and comfort within such protective structures. It is best to capture/combat a wrestling cryptid while it has no observable team affiliations or in-ring alliances.

The surest way to analyze and investigate a wrestling cryptid is to challenge it to a sanctioned match. Even if you are pinned or submit, you will be able to gain valuable insights into important details of a given cryptid via its moveset and ring strategy.

For field identification there is no substitute for experience. Wrestle as many cryptids as you can and keep notes on every encounter, and soon you'll have a storehouse of knowledge as well as a potentially respectable win/loss record.

CRYPTID TAXONOMY

Most wrestling cryptids can be placed into one of eight categories based on their background and wrestling style. These categories will be used throughout this guide:

Monster

A being with a strange or grotesque appearance that is often dangerous or aggressive.

Example: The Swamp Monster, Burger Bear

Humanoid

A non-human entity with a human form or that displays human characteristics.

Examples: Bigfoot, The Yeti

Hybrid

An organism that incorporates elements from both humans and non-human animals.

Examples: Mantaur, Black Taurus

Lycanthrope

An individual who can shape-shift into an animal.

Examples: The Wolfman, The Red Rooster

Demon

A malevolent entity typically obsessed with facepaint and/or masks.

Examples: The Dread Trog, Kane, Finn Balor (sometimes)

Unknown/Unknowable

No one knows what the hell these things are. They're just weird.

Examples: The Missing Link, The Gobbledy Gooker

Wild Man

Ostensibly a human, yet one who has abandoned the trappings of humanity and civilization and reverted to an animalistic, feral state.

Examples: Wild Bull Curry, George "The Animal" Steel

Giant

Of normal human appearance, except unusually massive in size and bearing.

Examples: Andre the Giant, King Kong Bundy

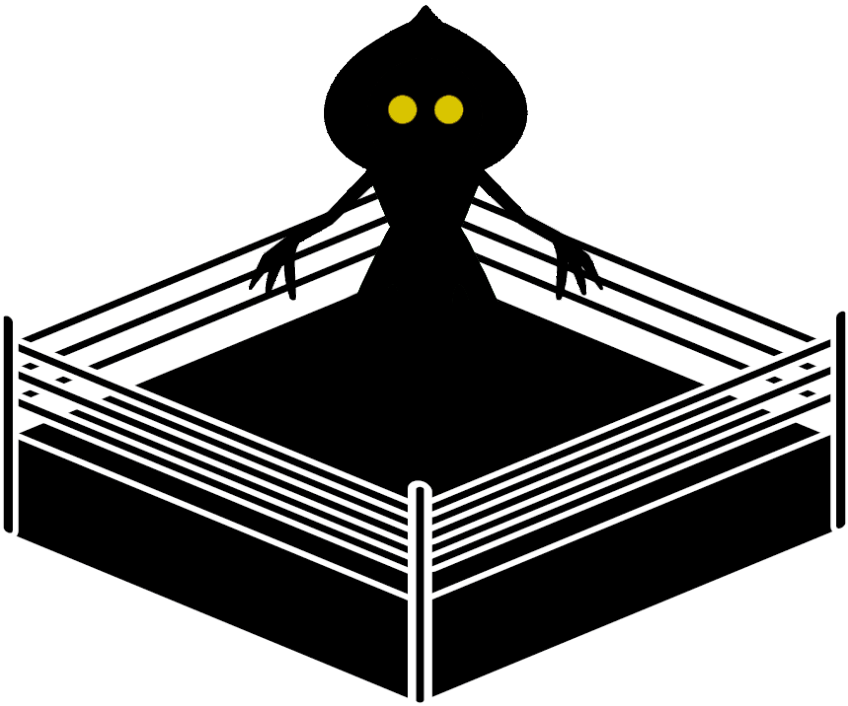
ENCOUNTER RULES

If you encounter a wrestling cryptid in the wild or in an arena/armory/civic center/gymnasium, remember:

- **Do NOT make eye contact**
- **Be aware and wary of unusual appendages, including tentacles or flippers**
- **Do not challenge it to a match unless you have access to a regulation ring and a fully licensed and bonded referee**
- **Do not shake its hand**
- **Negotiate match type and victory conditions BEFORE the bell rings**
- **When a location has many specimens of wrestling cryptids, get the hell out of there!**

If you have questions or issues, contact your nearest Department of Wrestling field office

WRESTLING CRYPTID PROFILES



ALUSHE

Taxonomy: Unknown/Unknowable
First Sighting: 1988 in Torreon, Coahuila, Mexico
Known Areas of Activity: CMLL, FULL
Height: 2’7”
Weight: 99 lb.

Comments: The longtime sidekick/*mascota* of luchador legend Tinieblas, Alushe has been observed working to foil *rudos* who are trying to take down the Son of the Night. But of course, the salient question is: what exactly IS Alushe? He’s allegedly an elf who was born in the year 1767, yet he doesn’t bear much resemblance to a traditional elf. It is also common to hear him described as an Ewok, which makes some sense in that he’s short and furry, yet the fact remains that Ewoks are not real and Alushe is. Recent research indicates that the mystery goes deeper than previously imagined, as it has been noted that Alushe bears an incredibly striking resemblance to the animatronic ape-like things that try to destroy KISS in the revered 1978 documentary KISS Meets the Phantom of the Park. Given this data and context, it must be taken into consideration that Alushe might actually be a robot created by the titular park phantom, master engineer Abner Devereaux. More research into this issue is required.

BIGFOOT

Taxonomy: Humanoid
First Sighting: 1958 in Humboldt County, California, USA
Known Areas of Activity: AJPW, NJPW, NWA, WWF
Height: 6’9”
Weight: Variable

Comments: Bigfoot’s inclusion in this guide has occasionally been controversial, as although he has long been associated with wrestling, sightings of him in an actual match are rare and/or nonexistent. However, as definitively established by the Department of Wrestling, Bigfoot MUST be recognized as a cryptid wrestler. This is because Bigfoot was featured in two Season 3 episodes of The Six Million Dollar Man in 1976. In these episodes, the main character of Steve Austin (the name is NOT a coincidence) investigates the disappearance of some geologists and encounters Bigfoot in the process. This Bigfoot is portrayed by none other than noted cryptid wrestler Andre the Giant. This cannot be considered happenstance - Andre was chosen for the role because only a cryptid could accurately portray a cryptid, and if the cryptid chosen to perform this task was a wrestling cryptid, it stands to reason that the cryptid it was portraying was also a wrestling cryptid. Therefore, Bigfoot is a wrestling cryptid, *ipso facto*. It should be noted that in a delicious bit of subliminal information dissemination, the popular dance craze that recently swept through the United States, “Do the Sasquash,” is actually an illustration and simulation of one of the only wrestling moves known to be consistently effective against Bigfoot in the ring, the Military Press Slam. Investigators would do well to keep this in mind.

BLACK TAURUS

Taxonomy: Hybrid
First Sighting: 2017 in Tijuana, Baja California, Mexico
Known Areas of Activity: CMLL, AAA, Impact Wrestling, MLW, PWG
Height: 5’10”
Weight: 200 lb.

Comments: A recent addition to the wrestling cryptid landscape, Black Taurus has been observed to be actively wreaking havoc in a variety of promotions. Traditionally he resembles a classic minotaur, although as of publication he has never been observed in or near a labyrinth. Approach this wrestling cryptid with extreme caution.

BURGER BEAR

Taxonomy: Monster
First Sighting: 2017 in Orlando, Florida, USA
Known Areas of Activity: Kaiju Big Battel
Height: Unknown - Approximately 6’
Weight: Unknown

Comments: This shocking being is exactly what its name says it is: the body of a bear, the head of a burger, the skills of a wrestler. Burger Bear is not to be underestimated despite his unusual appearance, as he has won championship gold and is currently still known to be active in the wild. For incredible real-life footage of this wrestling monstrosity’s in-ring abilities, it is recommended that agents view his appearance in the Over the Top Battel Royale with Cheese from 2019 (consult the ‘Suggested Matches’ section at the back of this Field Guide for more options).

THE CANADIAN WILDMAN

Taxonomy: Wild Man
First Sighting: 1958 in Toronto, Ontario, Canada
Known Areas of Activity: Maple Leaf Wrestling, Stampede Wrestling, WWA, AWA, WWF
Height: 5’ 11”
Weight: 229 lb.

Comments: TCW, aka the Bearman, emerged from the wilds of Ontario and applied his savage skills to the wrestling ring with a ferocity and intensity not typically observed in wrestling cryptids. This translated to great in-ring successes which included winning a few titles, defeating legendary human wrestlers such as Antonio Inoki, and being inducted into the Canadian Wrestling Hall of Fame, feats that no other wrestling cryptids have been known to accomplish. Additionally, TCW is worth examining for several reasons, including the fact that he used his bestial abilities to train Terrible Ted, a seven-foot black bear who also wrestled, in what is thought to be the only known team-up between a wrestling cryptid and a wrestling animal. TCW was also often known to partner with *another* wrestling cryptid from our list, The Wolfman, in a rare double-cryptid wrestling combination. Although it has been some time since he has been sighted, it must be stressed that the current whereabouts of TCW are unknown.

THE GOBBLEDY GOOKER

Taxonomy: Unknown/Unknowable [although some have argued that it's a Monster and/or a Humanoid]
First Sighting: 1990 in Hartford, Connecticut, USA
Known Areas of Activity: WWF/WWE
Height: 5' 10"
Weight: 205 lb.

Comments: Unlike every other wrestling cryptid on this list, The Gobbledy Gooker's moment of creation was observed and preserved on video, when he hatched from an egg at the 1990 WWF Survivor Series. And yet, following this auspicious debut, the giant turkey-man-thing disappeared from view for several decades. In recent years, however, a number of Gobbledy Gooker sightings have been reported, and it is even rumored that the thing held the WWE 24/7 Championship for a period of time. The Gobbledy Gooker is therefore considered to still be very much active. NOTE: Investigators who come across a giant unhatched egg during the course of their field work are encouraged to disengage and call for backup immediately. Attempting to turn the egg into an omelet is HIGHLY DISCOURAGED.

MANTAUR

Taxonomy: Hybrid
First Sighting: 1994 in Newark, Delaware, USA
Known Areas of Activity: WWF, PWA, GCW
Height: 6’0”
Weight: 401 lb.

Comments: This fearsome monstrosity arrived in the wrestling world from parts unknown in the mid-90s and disappeared relatively quickly, although it has been sighted sporadically since then. Even for a cryptid the Mantaur is confusing, in that sometimes it resembles a minotaur and sometimes it just seems to be a guy with a shaved head who is wearing strange makeup. As such, it is unknown what, if any, connection the Mantaur has with Black Taurus, although we note that much like Black Taurus, Mantaur has never been sighted anywhere near a labyrinth. Even though the Mantaur has not been encountered in some time and has seemingly vanished into the mists of legend and myth, it should be remembered that it did at one point briefly challenge for the Intercontinental Title and should therefore still be considered a serious threat.

SWARK

THE SHARK

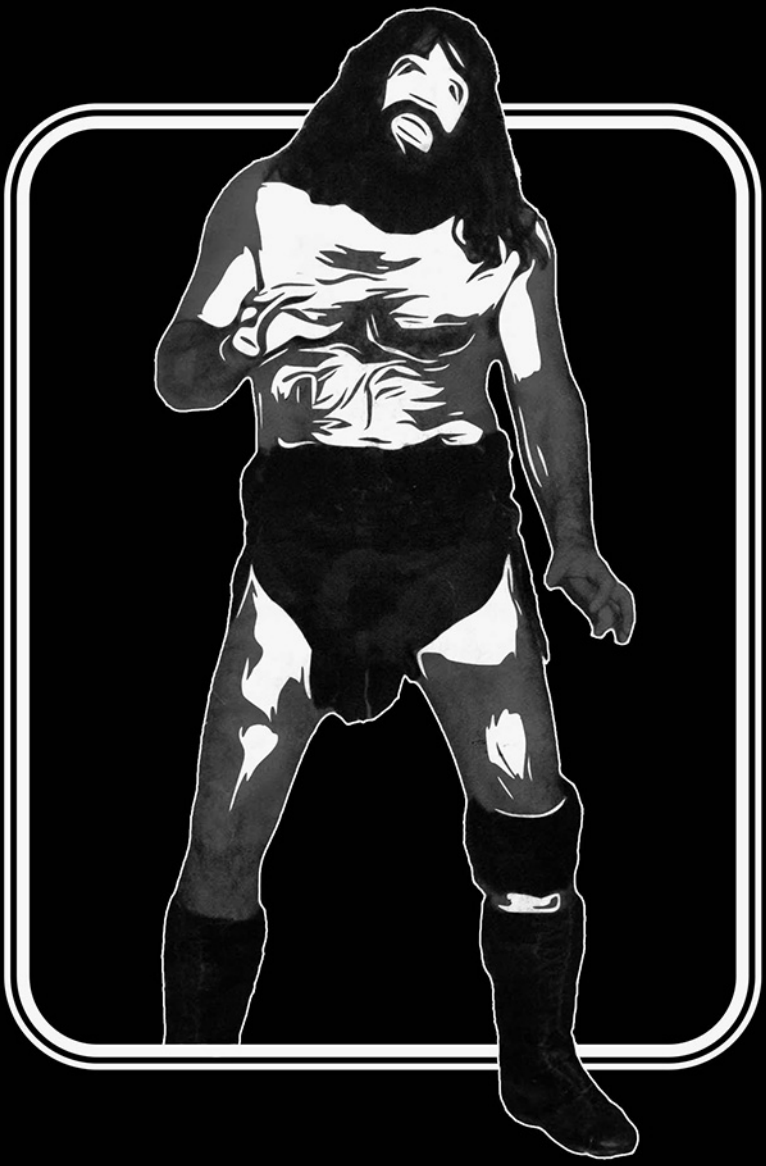
Taxonomy: Hybrid
First Sighting: 1995 in Macon, Georgia, USA
Known Areas of Activity: WCW
Height: 6’7”
Weight: 468 lb.

Comments: Is it a shark? Is it a man? Is it both? Little is known about the origins of this dreaded cartilaginous fish-person, other than that it hailed from The Great Barrier Reef and is the only known version of a shark to be able to walk on two legs. We *do* know that The Shark posed a serious threat to man and fish when it appeared in the ring. While it has not been sighted in the field since the mid-1990s, this might be an illusion, as The Shark may have simply continued to evolve its phenomenal ability to blend itself into human society. As always, investigators are advised to be vigilant and cautious if attempting to track this wily competitor.

THE SWAMP MONSTER

Taxonomy: Monster
First Sighting: 2012 in Easton, Pennsylvania, USA
Known Areas of Activity: CHIKARA Pro
Height: Variable, but HUGE
Weight: Also variable, also HUGE

Comments: Purportedly hailing from the Everglades, The Swamp Monster is a massive, undulating, sentient monstrosity made from all the goop and grime that one typically finds in wetlands. Unlike most of the wrestling cryptids on our list, The Swamp Monster seems just fine with teaming up with non-monsters, including humans, to achieve its in-ring goals, having done so on numerous occasions. Being so massive, The Swamp Monster is able to generate a shocking amount of force, but it has also demonstrated a surprisingly refined and developed move-set and has been known to frequently devastate opponents with a powerful Top Rope Double Foot Stomp. If encountered, investigators might consider inviting The Swamp Monster to form an alliance before trying to pin it. It is unknown as of press time if The Swamp Monster is related in any way to Swamp Thing.



THE WOLFMAN

Taxonomy: Lycanthrope
First Sighting: 1964 in Calgary, Alberta, Canada
Known Areas of Activity: WWWF, Maple Leaf Wrestling, AJPW
Height: 6'2"
Weight: 250 lb.

Comments: Investigators would be forgiven for being confused when encountering The Wolfman, as he isn't covered in fur, he doesn't have fangs, and he seems to be in his state permanently, as opposed to only during specific lunar cycles. In short, he's nothing like what you see in the movies. The issue is that you are mostly likely thinking of a werewolf, whereas the wrestling cryptid under examination is a wolfman. The distinction should now be clear and all confusion should be dispelled. At any rate, The Wolfman first appeared as Willie Farkas in 1970; following a brief stint in Hawaii, he returned to the continental US as The Wolfman. We don't what happened during that Hawaii trip, but it must have been something serious indeed, and this is the only known case of a human morphing into a cryptid. While no competitor who faced The Wolfman was ever themselves turned into a similar type of fiend, the possibility remains that this could be the case, and investigators are encouraged to make sure their Rabies vaccines are up to date.

SELECTED MATCHES

Investigators are encouraged to visit the private URL bit.ly/WrestlingCryptids in order to view a selection of matches that demonstrate the wrestling cryptids covered in this Field Guide in action. These matches include:

✴ Rare footage of Alushe showing off some terrifying moves in the ring.

✴ Stunning footage of Bigfoot being defeated by Steve Austin in a no holds barred street-fight match.

✴ Terrifying footage of Black Taurus devastating an opponent.

✴ Handsome footage of Burger Bear unleashing his burger power.

✴ A compilation of distressing footage of The Canadian Wildman in action.

✴ The shocking birth of The Gobbledy Gooker, captured by hidden surveillance cameras.

✴ Disquieting footage from one of the earliest confirmed sightings of the Mantaur.

✴ Confusing footage of The Shark trying to mind-warp his would-be opponents by claiming to be a human.

✴ Stupefying footage of The Swamp Monster teaming up with some humans to fight some other humans.

✴ A fascinating account from 1983 of The Destroyer battling The Wolfman and living to tell the tale.

REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

There is a growing body of academic research on wrestling cryptids. In general, this research is fascinating and sheds light on the ways in which these creatures are used to explore themes of masculinity, identity, and cultural difference, as well as their move-sets. Investigators are encouraged to seek out these materials and familiarize themselves with their contents.

“Wrestling with Sharks: A Critical Analysis” by Sarah J. Lahlou, in Studies in Wrestling Culture, Vol. 136, No. 543 (2012), pp. 72-91.

“Bigfoot: An Examination of Cryptid Performance Art” by John C. Willis, in The Journal of Wrestling Folklore, Vol. 46, No. 1 (1990), pp. 113-132.

“Black Taurus: A Case Study in Wrestling Hybridity” by Christopher P. Lehman, in Canadian Review of American Wrestling, Vol. 32, No. 2 (2020), pp. 223-240.

“Luchacabra: The Mexican Goatman and His Impact on Lucha Libre” by Luis A. Vazquez, in The Wrestling Compendium, Vol. 46, No. 2 (1985), pp. 145-160.

“Alushe In and Around the Ring” by by Carlos Hernandez, in The Journal of Professional Wrestling, Vol. 47, No. 3 (2011), pp. 277-294.

“Burger Bear: The Wrestling Career of a Mythical Beast” by Susan Jones, in The Grappler’s Digest, Vol. 53, No. 2 (2019), pp. 211-232.

“Channeling the Power of the Jaguar? Perspectives on Black Taurus” by Maria Garcia, in Ringside Reports, Vol. 46, No. 3 (2017), pp. 325-342.

“More Than Just a Man? An Analysis of The Canadian Wildman” by Michael Brown, in American Wrestological Review, Vol. 50, No. 1 (1980), pp. 37-56.

“Giving Thanks for The Gobbledy Gooker” by Sarah Green, in Mat Rat Monthly, Vol. 46, No. 4 (1995), pp. 397-414.

“Shark Sighting: The Mermaid Man of Professional Wrestling” by William Blue, in The Piledriver Post, Vol. 40, No. 1 (2005), pp. 67-84.

“A Wrestling Terror from the Bayou” by Jessica Black, in The Chokehold Chronicles, Vol. 46, No. 3 (2020), pp. 291-310.

“Slams on Screen: Did The Wolfman Inspire a Movie Monster or Was it the Other Way Around?” by David White, in The Bodyslam Bulletin, Vol. 136, No. 544 (1981), pp. 23-42.

“The Luchacabra: The Mexican Goatman Who Conquered the Wrestling World” by Andrea Lopez, in The Figure-Four Newsletter, Vol. 46, No. 4 (1983), pp. 415-428.

“The Wrestling Career of Bigfoot: A Historical Perspective” by Jack Steel, in DDT Digest, Vol. 32, No. 3 (1979), pp. 357-368.

“The Shark: A Cultural Icon in Professional Wrestling” by Lucius McGoo, in Steel Cage Quarterly, Vol. 46, No. 5 (1994), pp. 493-506.

“The Canadian Wildman: A Cryptid Wrestler from the Great White North” by Sarah White, in Canadian Wrestling Perspectives, Vol. 18, No. 43 (1997), pp. 27-52.

“The Swamp Monster vs The Marsh Man: A Battle for the Ages” by Ryan Rousseau, in Piledriver Almanac, Vol. 169, No. 280 (2022), pp. 345-367.

“A Further Examination of the Creations of Abner Devereaux” by Peter Brown, in The Wrestling Engineering Newsletter, Vol. 23, No. 231 (2000), pp. 67-89.

“Burger Bear: A Jungian Perspective” by Maria R. Estrada, in The Ringpost Annual, Vol. 10, No 10 (2023), pp. 89-102.

“Secrets of the Luchacabra” by Dr. Blaise Q. Natterton-Stunch, Independent Book-Length Publication (1989).

Pending official document issuance, investigators are empowered to cut out, fill out, and present the two-sided badge below when on department business.

US DEPARTMENT OF WRESTLING

wrestling with a changing world

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF WRESTLING
CRYPTID INVESTIGATION DIVISION

CRYPTID INVESTIGATOR

SPECIALTY *SIGNATURE*

EXPIRES

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THE BEARER OF THIS CARD
IS A GENUINE AND AUTHORIZED
INVESTIGATOR IN THE UNITED
STATES DEPARTMENT OF
WRESTLING'S CRYPTID
INVESTIGATION DIVISION AND
IS ENTITLED TO ALL PRIVILEGES
AND BENEFITS AS SUCH.

Looks great when placed in a lanyard! (Note: lanyard not provided.)

Investigators are encouraged to photocopy this page as needed in order to record any encounters they may have in the field with a wrestling cryptid.

Cryptid Observation Form

Agent: _____
Date: _____
Location: _____
Venue: _____

Describe the four most important physical details of the wrestling cryptid observed, including size, coloring, unusual features, catch-phrases used, etc.

Detail 1 _____

Detail 2 _____

Detail 3 _____

Detail 4 _____

Wrestling Cryptid Taxonomical Classification:

- ☐ Monster
- ☐ Humanoid
- ☐ Hybrid
- ☐ Lycanthrope
- ☐ Demon
- ☐ Wild Man
- ☐ Giant
- ☐ Unknown
- ☐ Unknowable
- ☐ Other/Misc.

Time Interval	Moves Demonstrated	Factions / Stables	Heel / Face
(Choose a time interval and repeat for each observation)			

Summarize the encounter and provide any recommendations for further action as you see fit:

_____

_____

_____

Do you know any friends/tag partners who would like to receive the secret information in FIELD GUIDE TO WRESTLING CRYPTIDS? If so, fill in the information below and THEY WILL HEAR FROM US SOON!

PLEASE CONTACT:

Name: _____

Street: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____

Country: _____

Check _Friend _Relative _Unregistered Foreign Agent

PLEASE CONTACT:

Name: _____

Street: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____

Country: _____

Check _Friend _Relative _Unregistered Foreign Agent

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